She continues her work the same as usual before the baby's advent. Some neighbour woman who has helped other children into the world is probably on hand to help usher hers in. But the help given is negligible. They await nature's process, sometimes holding the mother up in a sitting posture with just her feet touching the ground. A sheep may be sacrificed to expedite matters. 843 844

When the child is born the cord is cut with a knife or a sharp piece of cane. It is not tied, and does not bleed. 844

The mother's food consists of gruel for some days. Then she resumes her usual diet. She cares for her baby, the neighbour woman or her mother bathing it for her for several weeks. She feeds the baby whenever it cries and usually gives it cow's milk until she has enough of her own for it. 845 853

When preparing the bath for the baby an earthen pot of water is heated. The baby is bathed in the late afternoon. The body is thoroughly greased all over, then the water (to us it seems like quite hot water) is splashed upon it, while the one who is bathing the baby rubs it briskly, massaging its back especially. Then when this part of the bath is over, she washes the child's eyes by licking them with her tongue, much as a cat would do with its kitten. The nose is also cleaned in like manner. 854

Various plans are resorted to in order to guard the baby from the evil eye. Charms are put upon its body, being fastened to necklace or wristlet. A rope is stretched out in the yard so that passers-by will know that strangers are not welcome.

The young mother sends word to her husband when she wants him to know about the birth of the child, so that he may come. No one asks whether it is a boy or a girl. The father may bring his wife a present of fish, and he may try to keep her supplied with fish for a little while. 846

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THE CARE OF BABIES

854 A basket made of branches of a pliable wood is used as a baby-basket. A piece of animal skin which has had the hair scraped off, and is smooth, is put in the basket for the baby to lie on. If the mother has a piece of cloth she may cover the baby with it. Then a large woven grass mat is placed on top of the basket, being rolled up at each side until it just covers the top of the basket and keeps the sun off the baby and also keeps an active baby from sitting up in the basket while being carried. The mother always holds the side of the basket with one hand while carrying the baby in it upon her head.

When she arrives at her destination she carefully lowers the basket to the ground and unties the strings which hold the mat secure, and peeps at the baby. If it is asleep she unrolls the ends of the mat and lets them down to the ground at either side so that the baby may sleep undisturbed by light or sound. But if the baby is awake she carefully pulls the cloth or sheepskin covering that is over the upper part of her body round in front of her and over the baby-basket, and lifts up the baby under the cloth into her lap, so that no one—especially one with the evil eye—may see it.

A rattle is made by taking a small gourd which has a neck to it and putting a few pebbles in it. This is shaken vigorously when the child is crying.

A pacifier may be made for an older child (at least one year old or older) by taking the neck of a small gourd and cutting it off about one inch from the end. This may then be fastened to the wrist of the child with a string of beads and is ever ready when desired.

A little child is often given a strand of its mother's beads to play with, but its playthings are few.

846 The mother wears a leather belt with a border of shells;

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she may call herself 'a woman who has just given birth to a child' for months afterwards, and try to solicit privileges on that account. 846

Nuer mothers love their babies and try to do all they can in their limited way for them. Whatever the child may lack, it does not lack its mother's love while she is living. But if the mother dies life is a different thing for the child that is left. A new-born baby demands food, and the artificial feeding of babies is an art entirely unknown to the Nuer. What to do with the small piece of humanity is a serious proposition. 854

Rumour says that they may bury the new-born baby with the dead mother, arguing that it will die soon anyhow, but I do not know of any authentic case where the live child has been buried. It is, however, very true that the motherless baby soon follows its mother. Five motherless infants have been brought to the mission at Nasser, as the people know that the art of the artificial feeding of infants is not unknown there. Two of these babies died, while three have lived so far. 847 165

TWINS

Twins are not uncommon, but are usually a cause of distress to their parents, for they are sure that one will die—and it usually does fail to survive. The mother always nurses one child at one breast and the second child at the other breast, and thus divides the supply of food as evenly as she can between them. 845 855

When a man is the father of twins, his brother will sacrifice a sheep before he eats with him so that no harm may come to the babies.

The Nuer has a superstition in regard to the burial of new-born twins. Rumour says that they prefer to tie the hands together and hang them up in a tree rather than 766